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NEW THORNLESS HONEY LOCUST SELECTIONS: RHODODENDRON SMIRNOWI: EUONYMUS FORTUNEI VARIATIONS: *PETASITES HYBRIDUS,* BOG RHUBARB

Four new selections of America's current shade tree favorite, the Thornless Honeysuckle, have been sent to the Morton Arboretum for observation and testing by the firm introducing them, the Cole Nursery Company of Mentor, Ohio. Considered sufficiently distinct to warrant patent applications, the three are said to display characteristics heretofore unreported in the species and to offer landscape possibilities seemingly worthy of acquaintance.

The first of these, *Gleditsia triacanthos inermis* (Coles No. 16), differs noticeably from the type in having a relatively narrow upright habit of growth resulting in a well filled tree of rather formal appearance. Suggesting an ideal subject for street planting, for accenting purposes, or for general use wherever a stately effect is required, it should find a ready welcome among tree planters.

A look at the foliage will reveal another good reason for the tree's segregation, its leaves having a rich deep green color and a heavy leathery texture. The fact that the leaflets are larger and more closely spaced than those of the average honeylocust results in a denser, more compact crown. An added attraction is provided by the bronzy coloring of the unfolding leaves. Bearing as it does a predominance of staminate (male) flowers, very few pods are produced.

This clone is said to be rapid growing and to develop an exceptionally strong, sturdy trunk without staking and with a minimum of pruning.

Another Cole Honeylocust, *Gleditsia triacanthos inermis* (Coles No.

18), which has been described as the most shapely and graceful of all selections, is a vigorous straight growing tree producing a fairly broad yet compact head. The branches are well spaced, radiating uniformly from the trunk at nearly ninety degree angles.

In contrast to No. 16, this tree's foliage is small and refined and of a refreshing medium green coloring. The leaves are more closely spaced than on ordinary honeylocust, and because of the dense branching form a heavier canopy. The complete absence of female flowers insures no pods and the tree is thornless. Like No. 16, it is classed as fast growing, and easily maintained without staking and with little pruning.

One of the newest of the Cole Honeylocust selections, *Gleditsia triacanthos inermis* (Coles No. 23), is a shapely subject described as being more or less intermediate in habit between number 16 and 18. It is a graceful tree of reasonably fast growth whose symmetrically arranged branches form a much more regular and compact head than does the ordinary honeylocust.

There is a noticeable boldness about the foliage with its closely spaced leaflets of dark green, and a distinction worth remembering in their habit of persisting ten days or so longer in the fall than is usual in the type.

Its tendency toward straight trunks and strong crotches obviates the necessity of staking or special trimming and although drouth resistant, it has also been observed to tolerate moist, poorly drained soil.

Gleditsia triacanthos inermis (No. 154), Cole's Thornless Honeylocust, a tree of more recent selection, was singled out chiefly because of its rapidity of growth, good branching habit and heavy fruiting characteristic. It is a straight branched tree with lacy foliage of medium green.

An earlier Cole introduction, the patented Sunburst Locust, *Gleditsia triacanthos inermis aurea* (Pat. No. 1313), continues to attract attention by reason of the bright golden coloring of its new foliage. Throughout the summer the contrast of this new growth with the rich green of the rest of the tree gives every appearance of continuous blossom. Its habit of growth emphasizes the most desirable qualities of the type, a broadly pyramidal head of unmatched symmetry.

Rhododendron Smirnowi, (Trautv.), Smirnow Rhododendron

By far the most interesting of this spring's additions to the Ericaceae collection, is the large old specimen of the Smirnow Rhododendron obtained from a grower in the Northern Ohio nursery area.

A native of the Caucasus region of southeastern Europe, this sturdy

Bog Rhubarb, *Petasites hybridus,* naturalized along a small stream on a Lake Forest estate.

4 to 6 foot shrub which sometimes attains small tree stature in its native habitat, is notable for two reasons: is hardiness (Zone IV), for it occurs at altitudes of from five to eight thousand feet; and its resistance to lace bug, an insect frequently disfiguring rhododendron foliage.

From an appearance standpoint, however, one is most attracted by its exceptional density and compactness and by the conspicuous felty white or light tan undersurfaces of its leathery evergreen foliage. The leaves average from 3 to 6 inches in length and from 1 to 2 in breadth, are narrowly oblong in shape, blunt tipped and tapered at the base. It flowers about the same time as *"catawbiense"* (late May or early June), producing its large rose or rosy purple blooms abundantly in well shaped trusses. Individual flowers have broad funnel shaped corollas often with wavy margins.

Preferring a subacid soil with a ph of 5.00 or 6.00, a maintained acidity is essential to the plant's successful culture.

Euonymus Fortunei Variations

Known to be extremely variable, it is not surprising that the versatile Wintercreeper Euonymus, *Euonymus Fortunei,* should occur in such a diversity of shapes and sizes. With the differences between many of them often times very slight, however, the advisability of exercising restraint in naming varieties should be emphasized. Where the distinctions are pronounced, of course, and a definite landscape value indicated, the situation is different. The patented forms included among the spring accessions illustrate the case at point. These consist of the following *Euonymus Fortunei vegeta* selections: **"Charm"** (Pat. No. 1079), an exceptionally compact specimen of narrow upright growth with foliage like the Bigleaf Wintercreeper; **"Cushion"** (Pat. No. 1112), a slow growing low cushion type whose roundish foliage suggests *"colorata";* **"Emerald Pride"** (Pat. No. 1073), neat compact shrub of oval growth with foliage also resembling the Purpleleaf Wintercreeper; and "**Leader**" (Pat. No. 881), the most distinct of all, a uniform, erect branched small leaved bush said to fruit profusely. These are all introductions of Corliss Bros. Inc., nurserymen of Gloucester, Massachusetts, who describe them as disease and drouth resistant and requiring little in the way of shearing, shaping and staking. Three larger specimens of the new Upright Euonymus, *E. Fortunei* **"Sarcoxie"**, were also added to the collection. One of the narrowest forms we have seen, this distinct erect grower is even more slender than *"erecta",* and has thick glossy foliage which retains its color well into the winter. The Siebenthaler nursery of Dayton, Ohio contributed still another selection, their Moraine Wintercreeper, *Euonymus Fortunei radi-*

cans "**Moraine**", a compact bushy type with foliage like Bigleaf Wintercreeper.

Petasites hybridus (L. Gaertn., Mey and Scherb) (*syn. "vulgaris"*)
Bob Rhubarb, Butterfly Dock or Purple Butterhorn

Bog Rhubarb is a most appropriate name for an attractive bold leaved perennial ground cover obtained this spring from an established planting on a Lake Forest estate, where since its importation from England some thirty years ago, it has naturalized itself effectively along a partly shaded small stream. This is the type of location in which it appears to best advantage, a semi-wild area where it can be allowed to spread at will and without concern as to the possibility of its becoming overly aggressive.

Conspicuous foliage is, as one would expect, the Bog Rhubarb's outstanding feature, the good sized, 3 to 24 inch diameter rounded or kidney shaped leaves attracting attention throughout the growing season. They are of medium green coloring with felty white undersurfaces and are borne on long petioles. Eighteen or twenty inches is the plant's usual height.

At this season interest is centered on the curious blossoms closely packed in compact cylindrical panicles 3 to 10 inches long. Individual flowers are small, rayless, purplish in color, tubular shaped and borne on short horizontal pedicels with linear basal bracts. They are more unusual than beautiful.

Although native of Europe, this species has escaped from cultivation in moist places in several of the eastern states.

E. L. Kammerer

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